



WORD OF LIFE

October 2006

Intercessions for Life

OCTOBER 2006

October 1st TWENTY SIXTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

For a repentance from deceit and a love for the truth:
that all Catholics might defend the sacred gift of life
every day of their lives;

We pray to the Lord:



October 8th TWENTY SEVENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

For every child conceived this week in our parish:
that through our prayers and our actions,
that tiny and vulnerable person
might be nourished in safety and love;

We pray to the Lord:



October 15th TWENTY EIGHTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

For President Bush, and all who govern this nation:
for the courage to defend the innocent,
and the wisdom to protect the weakest among us;

We pray to the Lord:



October 22nd TWENTY NINTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

For doctors who struggle to do the right thing,
and for their patients:
that the Gospel of Life might be their guide;

We pray to the Lord:



October 29th THIRTIETH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

For legislators who work to preserve
the life and liberty of every human being:
that God bless their efforts to enshrine
that conviction in American law;

We pray to the Lord:

Hence, as well as the words of the Church, the witness and public commitment of Christian families is very important, especially in order to reassert the inviolability of human life from conception until its natural end.

Pope Benedict XVI, Address To The Participants in the Ecclesial Diocesan Convention of Rome, June 6, 2005

There are many language games being played. Supreme Court justices we're told, should be uniters, when it comes to *Roe v. Wade*. How ironic, since *Roe v. Wade* has become our great source of division. Now to be a uniter means to uphold that which divided us in the first place. "The Dictatorship of Relativism", Most Reverend Robert C. Morlino, National Catholic Prayer Breakfast, April 7, 2006

The joyful love with which our parents welcomed us and accompanied our first steps in this world is like a sacramental sign and prolongation of the benevolent love of God from which we have come.

Pope Benedict XVI, Homily of the Holy Father, On Occasion of the Fifth World Meeting of Families, July 9, 2006

Today, the various forms of the erosion of marriage, such as free unions and "trial marriage", and even pseudo-marriages between people of the same sex, are instead an expression of anarchic freedom that are wrongly made to pass as true human liberation. This pseudo-freedom is based on a trivialization of the body, which inevitably entails the trivialization of the person.

Pope Benedict XVI, Address to the Participants in the Ecclesial Diocesan Convention of Rome, June 6, 2005

Precisely in order to have life, a "no" is said to the child, because it takes some part of my life away from me; a "no" is said to the future, in order to have the whole of the present; a "no" is said to unborn life as well as to suffering that is approaching death. What seems to be a culture of life becomes the anti-culture of death, where God is absent, where that God who does not ordain hatred but overcomes hatred is absent.

Pope Benedict XVI, Address to Members of the Roman Clergy, March 2, 2006

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It can be concluded from this data that the human embryo in the phase of pre-implantation is already: a) a being of the human species; b) an individual being; c) a being that possesses in itself the finality to develop as a human person together with the intrinsic capacity to achieve such development.

Pontifical Academy for Life, International Congress on "The human embryo in the pre-implantation phase: Scientific aspects and bioethical considerations", April 26, 2006

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Preaching for Life

(Lectionary for Mass, no. 137)

Nm 11:25-29 *Would that all the people of the Lord were prophets!*

Jas 5:1-6 *Your wealth has rotted away.*

Mk 9:38-43, 45, 47-48 *If your hand causes you to sin, cut it off.*

Would that all the people of the Lord were prophets! The spirit of God comes to rest on the seventy elders so that they might prophesy in the name of the Lord. The need for prophets was so great that Moses would be happy if he had as many prophets as there were people of Israel! How much more do we need prophets today!

When one in four children in their mother's womb are not safe from being killed by abortion. When euthanasia is advocated as a way of ending the lives of those who are terminally ill or cognitively impaired. When children are abused, neglected, and forced to live on the street. When marriage is viewed as a legal contract whose meaning is debated by legislators and jurists and not as a sacred covenant given by God. When the family breaks more often than it thrives. When the very old and the very young are seen as dispensable, a commodity to be warehoused or disposed of or forgotten. We need prophets. May God send forth his spirit to anoint them!

The Law of the Lord

The Responsorial Psalm today speaks of law. Most of us encounter the law when we drive too fast on the way to work, or misfile our taxes, or watch Court TV. Most of us see the law as something affecting the characters on "Law and Order" or the subjects of the latest trial we read about in the newspaper.

But the law is quite different than that. THE LAW is the law of God, and we just sang a song claiming that it brings joy to the heart, that it refreshes the soul, and that it brings wisdom to the simple. Such a law has not been written in any human law book, but on the human heart. The Psalmist tells us this law lasts forever; it is born of fear of the LORD, pure, true and just. Jesus tells us about this law. It begins with love of the Ten Commandments and the command that we should love the Lord our God with our whole heart and souls, and our neighbor as ourselves. It is a law which calls us to sell all we have and give everything to God, to be like Christ on the cross.

From the time of Abel, God's law has viewed the murder of the innocent as among the greatest sins against God's law. God's law brings joy; sin brings despair. It rules over us, as the psalmist tells us, and we must strive to be freed from it. Violations of the Gospel of Life are particularly virulent in this regard. They seem expedient, convenient and a solution to all our problems at the moment of their commission. But violation of the law of the LORD, written on the heart of every human being, eats away at us, from the inside out. Two choices are always before us: The law, the good and the life versus selfishness, evil and death. And we get to choose.

Your wealth has rotted away.

Was anyone ever as stark as St. James in predicting misery for the rich? Those who place their trust in wealth will see it rot away. They'll see their fine clothes eaten by moths. Their gold and silver will corrode with the same corrosion that will devour their flesh with fire. No wonder he tells the rich to weep and wail!

Why are these rich people so miserable? Because they have been unjust. Their ill-gotten gains came from defrauding their employees, and ignoring the cries of those they deprived. But even if their ears are closed to the cry of their victims, these cries "have reached the ears of the Lord of hosts." So God condemns them for choosing their luxury and pleasure over the life of the poor man. Their crime is clear: "You have murdered the righteous one."

The application of this text to those who would kill a child in her mother's womb is frightening. But so, too, is its application to those who refuse to work for the Gospel of Life:

- Who choose political expediency over the life of the unborn child
- Who attend to their own comforts when defenseless children need their support
- Who sit in a pew listening to a sermon, but refuse to let it change their lives
- Who see the Gospel of Life as an abstraction, not as a personal obligation
- Who never visit their parents or listen to their children
- Who never pray for the man on death row, or work for his life to be spared
- Who never grapple with the moral dimensions of embryonic stem cell research

Do we work for the Gospel of Life? Do we work to save the little one whom everyone else defrauds? Or do we fatten our hearts for the day of judgment. Tough words, but true for those who live their lives in splendid isolation.

If your hand causes you to sin, cut it off.

What is the worst sin? Is it murder or apostasy? Many men and women, far more intelligent than you and I, have tried to answer that question. But it is clear from Christ's words that it is a very great sin indeed to lead a "little one" into sin! The "little ones" are Christ's disciples, and it is clear from his words that nothing in life is worth more than virtue. Not even my hand, my foot or my eye is worth more than doing what God requires of me. That is why preaching and working for the Gospel of Life is so essential. The choice is clear: obedience or disobedience, life or death, virtue or sin, heaven or hell. It is that clear.

Intercessions for Life

For President Bush, the members of Congress
and the Supreme Court,
that they may have the courage and wisdom to establish and promote laws
which protect the dignity of human life
from conception until natural death;
We pray to the Lord:

For all unborn children,
and especially for the babies of unmarried mothers,
that God might send an angel to protect them;
We pray to the Lord:

For all mothers, particularly those who are with child,
that they may be supported
by loved ones and warm friends,
and that they may be understood and blessed;
We pray to the Lord:

For the children who have died from abortion in our nation,
and for their mothers and fathers,
for mercy, peace and the loving embrace of Christ;
We pray to the Lord:

For all who work for life,
and especially those who pray at abortion clinics,
that God might reward them for their prayers;
We pray to the Lord:

For all whose hearts ache from the sin of abortion,
that God will soothe and heal them with the balm of his mercy;
We pray to the Lord:

For a growing love of God's little ones,
in the womb, in the nursing home or at death's door.
That we might love with the love of Jesus;
We pray to the Lord:

For all mothers,
especially those who are young or alone, beaten or addicted;
that God might heal their broken hearts
and seal them with his love;
We pray to the Lord:

For our Church,
that through the proclamation of the Gospel of Life,
we might live the cross of our Lord, Jesus Christ,
and proclaim his good news to all the world;